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Carol X Weakley 08/01/2006 02:38:13 PM From DB/Inbox: Carol X Weakley

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INFO: DAO AMB POL DCM

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SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

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SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:  
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Secretary Rice to Israel, July 29-31, 2006

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Key stories in the media:  
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This morning all electronic media covered a press conference by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in Jerusalem, quoting her as

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saying that she will call for a UN cease-fire resolution this week. Secretary Rice urged the international community to create an

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"international stabilization force" in Lebanon. Israel Radio noted that Secretary Rice refrained from calling for the disarming of Hizbullah.

All media reported that following the IAF strike on the southern Lebanese village of Kafr Qana, Israel agreed to suspend its aerial bombardment of southern Lebanon for 48 hours. Yediot reported that PM Ehud Olmert made the decision after a one-on-one meeting with Secretary Rice. Yediot quoted senior Israeli defense sources as

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saying that they were surprised by the decision. All media reported that on Sunday, Secretary Rice cancelled a scheduled visit to Beirut. Leading media quoted Olmert as saying that Israel reserves the right to attack sources of fire against it.

All media reported that in the deadliest attack since Israel started its offensive against Hizbullah 19 days ago, almost 60 civilians -- most of them children -- were killed on Sunday in a building in Kafr Qana, apparently as a result of an IAF missile strike. In 1996, Israel was forced to suspend Operation Grapes of Wrath against Hizbullah after IDF artillery shells killed more than 100 civilians seeking refuge in a UN building in the village. The media cited the IDF as saying that the army had warned Kafr Qana residents to evacuate the village in anticipation of air strikes on Katyusha launchers.

Israel Radio reported that on Sunday the UN Security Council expressed its "extreme shock and distress" over the Israeli air raid and called for an end to hostilities. "The Security Council expresses its concern at the threat of escalation of violence with further grave consequences for the humanitarian situation, calls for an end to violence, and underscores the urgency of securing a lasting, permanent and sustainable cease-fire," the 15-member Council said in a presidential statement, reached after unanimous agreement. Israel Radio reported that the US had softened the statement. The radio quoted Israel's Representative to the UN Danny Gillerman as saying before the Security Council that he regrets the deaths of Lebanese at Kafr Qana but that Hizbullah had shored itself up in southern Lebanon and that it was using residents as human shields.

All media reported that 100 Katyusha rockets landed in Kiryat Shmona Sunday.

Ha'aretz quoted Jibril Rajoub, the PA's National Security Adviser, as saying that the Kafr Qana events would delay the release of Cpl. Gilad Shalit.

All media reported that security services foiled a suicide bombing inside Israel Sunday when they arrested a man with an explosives belt near Nablus.

Similar to other leading media, The Jerusalem Post wrote: "Knesset members' responses to the air strike on Kafr Qana Sunday ranged from the furiously critical, via the apologetic, to the robustly supportive, largely along predictable party lines."

Leading media reported that Prof, Ghazi Falah, an Israeli-Canadian geographer who teaches at the University of Akron, Ohio, and who was detained three weeks ago on suspicion of spying for Hizbullah, was released without charges on Sunday.

The Jerusalem Post reported that a joint Christian-Jewish solidarity mission from the US will arrive in Israel on Monday to give moral support to the country during the war against Hizbullah. The newspaper also reported that Dr. Michael D. Evans, founder of the Evangelical Israel Broadcasting Network, is in Israel taping a major television special -- The Awakening -- that will be shown on several thousand Christian stations in the US as well as on major secular outlets.

Maariv reported that the American company Sandisk will announce today that it will purchase the Israeli firm Sandisk for USD 1.5 billion in shares. M-Systems is involved in legal difficulties in the US.

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Secretary Rice to Israel, July 29-31, 2006:

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Summary:  
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Washington correspondent Shmuel Rosner opined on page one of independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz: "Rice will return to Washington today, frustrated and bruised from two weeks of an exhausting trek that has ended on a bitter note."

On page one of popular, pluralist Maariv, diplomatic correspondent Ben Caspit wrote what he said is a proposal for a speech by Prime Minister Olmert: " I cannot remember such a wave of responses following the daily killing of 100 Iraqi civilians. Sunnis kill Shi'ites, who murder Sunnis, everybody kills Americans, and the entire world keeps mum."

Military correspondent Alex Fishman wrote in mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot: "The Prime Minister's decision to stop [Israel's] aerial activity in southern Lebanon is baffling, to say the least."

Ha'aretz editorialized: "Herein lies the window of opportunity to which President George Bush referred to, most recently on Friday, when he called on Syria to become an active partner in peace in the Middle East."

The conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized: "We -- the US, UK, and Israel, for starters -- must stand together for the truth and our own interests. We must not submit to the epitome of stupidity and immorality, masquerading as moral blackmail. If we do, we have no one to blame but ourselves."

Columnist and former Meretz Party Chairman Yossi Sarid wrote in Ha'aretz: "'We are sorry' is also true and very nice, but it is impossible to be too sorry until all the regret is used up."

Block Quotes:  
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1I. "The moment of Truth For the Bush Administration"

Washington correspondent Shmuel Rosner opined on page one of independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz (7/31): "For more than a year now US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has been working on her image

around the world. A year's worth of effort, and some worthy achievements, and then in two weeks of crisis everything is ruined. The Europeans, the ambassadors to the UN, the leaders of Arab states, all those who considered Rice a stabilizing factor, a calculated and reasonable person in the Bush administration, are reevaluating their stances. For Rice this is a personal blow, and also a professional obstacle. Her prestige is an important tool of the trade, and without it she will find it difficult to mark successes in the future. Rice will return to Washington today, frustrated and bruised from two weeks of an exhausting trek that has ended on a bitter note.... In different parts of the Bush administration there is a growing realization that the time is nearing when it will be necessary to 'cut and bolt with whatever is at hand,' as one Washington source said Sunday. Perhaps this will be sooner than Israel expects. Still, the White House is not the State Department."

## II. "We Will Not Fold"

On page one of popular, pluralist Maariv, diplomatic correspondent Ben Caspit wrote what he said is a proposal for a speech by Prime Minister Olmert (7/31): "Every place from which Katyusha rockets will be fired will be a legitimate target for our attacks. This must be said clearly, before the Israeli people and the world. You are invited to judge us, to shun us, to boycott us, and to defame us. To kill us? No way.... We do not dance on the roofs when we see the bodies of our enemies' children. We express true regrets and remorse. We do not adopt our enemies' bestial behavioral patterns... Iran established a huge infrastructure of terror along our borders, threatening our citizens. It is growing before our own eyes, waiting for the moment when the Ayatollahs' state turns into a nuclear power that would bring us to our knees. Make no mistake: we will not go down alone. You, the leaders of the free, enlightened world, will come down along with us. Let me bring this march of duplicity to an end -- here and now. I cannot remember such a wave of responses following the daily killing of 100 Iraqi civilians. Sunnis kill Shi'ites, who murder Sunnis, everybody kills Americans, and the entire world keeps mum."

## III. "Baffling Decision"

Military correspondent Alex Fishman wrote in mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot (7/31): "The Prime Minister's decision to stop [Israel's] aerial activity in southern Lebanon is baffling, to say the least. It curbs the momentum and the erosion process of Hizbullah. In fact, this it is starting a cease-fire process in the worst conditions for Israel. Hizbullah continues to shoot, keeps its head above water, Israel panics and folds under pressure. Not only should the battle not be stopped, but Israel must not relate to the Kafr Qana as a factor that is meant to affect it. This is not contempt for human lives.... Israel went to war to achieve objectives vital to its existence and it must abide by them. Otherwise the price it would have to pay would be unbearable for many years."

## IV. "Opportunity on Syria's Doorstep"

Ha'aretz editorialized (7/30): "The transfer of Sheba Farms to Lebanon requires that Syria officially recognize that this territory is Lebanese and not Syrian, as it has been described to date. It can be assumed that Syria will pose its own conditions for making concessions on Sheba Farms, which will allow it to retain its influence both in Lebanon and the region. Herein lies the window of opportunity to which President George Bush referred to, most recently on Friday, when he called on Syria to become an active partner in peace in the Middle East. It is possible that Bashar Assad is not a leader with the vision and courage necessary to make use of this window of opportunity which the war in Lebanon created, and it is possible that the best he can do is to retain hermetic control over the situation in Syria. However, this should not prevent Israel or the US from presenting him with the basis for a different option."

## V. "Reject Bogus Moral Blackmail"

The conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized (7/31): "It is appalling that Hizbullah would deliberately target Israel's cities, and do so from civilian areas, hoping that Israel would kill

greater numbers of Lebanese civilians. It is appalling that this barbaric tactic -- after some 5,000 Israeli bombing sorties -- has proved 'effective,' with tragic consequences for innocent Lebanese people, and producing the expected international fallout: not against Hizbullah, but against Israel. It is also appalling that for three weeks over a million Israelis -- Jews and Arabs -- have been living in bomb shelters, never knowing when a missile aimed at them will kill them or destroy their homes.... Are we powerless to overturn the bizarre moral calculus by which Israel is held accountable for the barbaric tactics of its enemies? We are not. We -- the US, UK, and Israel, for starters -- must stand together for the truth and our own interests. We must not submit to the epitome of stupidity and immorality, masquerading as moral blackmail. If we do, we have no one to blame but ourselves."

#### VI. "You Have Been Warned"

Columnist and former Meretz Party Chairman Yossi Sarid wrote in Ha'aretz (7/31): "The government didn't mean it and the military didn't mean it and the pilot didn't mean it. 'We didn't mean it' is a good argument, certainly, and yet not good enough. That is the last thing we need: to kill 60 civilians, including 30 children, intentionally, with malice and forethought. The government warned the residents of southern Lebanon, the IDF dropped pamphlets and declared: If you don't run for your lives, you will die. 'We warned' and 'We warned often' make a good argument, and yet not good enough. 'We are sorry' is also true and very nice, but it is impossible to be too sorry until all the regret is used up.... Here is Qana and here we will leap out of this war -- together with all the warned people, whether residents of shelters in South Lebanon or northern Israel. And we'll cry out from the depths of our hearts: Enough."

JONES